

ARLINGTON TREE COMMITTEE

Monthly Meeting – March 14, 2018, 7:30 pm, Selectmen's Hearing Room, Town Hall

Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Eliza Burden, Brian Turnbaugh (appointed by BoS but not yet sworn in), Tim Lecuivre, Steve Moore, Mara Vatz, John Ellis, Susan Stamps, Ed Trembly
Visitors: Nate, Irwin, Keith Schnebly, Brucie Moulton, JoAnne Preston

1. **Approve February Minutes.** APPROVED, pending approved amendments made by Susan to change the wording of her action item in Agenda item 2 and by John to change the spelling of HEAT to HEET. Both approved.
2. **DPW Tree Department Update (Tim)**
 - Review of Winter Damage. Catastrophic tree damage across town, esp. on Turkey Hill, by Water Tower in Arl Hgts, Claremont, Appleton. Worse at higher elevations. Operations manager will give list of trees that have fallen; Tim knew of at least 12 that toppled over and another 12 with significant enough damage to warrant eventual removal. **Action: Update tree inventory once Tim receives list.**
 - We do have another contract with marquis for 150K so we'll have them back in town to keep up with general tree care needs. At one point we've had two marquis crews helping us with storm damage.
 - The town has hired two arborists to fill out a full tree crew, so once John D is back after surgery, the town will have 2 tree crews on staff.
 - Fall 2017 planting and pruning/removals will be added to tree inventory when there's an opportunity to have a data entry training session that was delayed this week due to snow. Rescheduled for next week. **Action: Steve and Mara will participate in data entry.**
 - Tree Hearing. Foster St tree hearing happened on Mar 12. There was an objection from Christopher Loretti who was opposed to removing both ash trees. As of now they won't be permitted to be removed; it will go to BoS. Visitor JoAnn Preston asked if there could be a way to notify objectors when the BoS will address the issue so the objector can be present. John says the BoS has revised their communications because of Webcowet. **Action: John will send a letter to the board secretary regarding this issue of notifying objectors.**
 - Tim is awaiting Town Counsel to sign off on the borrowing of HEET's gas detection device that he will use to test for gas leaks Spring tree planting sites
 - Spring planting. We ordered 100 bare root trees and 16 ball and burlap trees, going to replace the DOT project on Mass Ave. Tree delivery will be delayed due to nursery being under snow still.
 - John mentioned there's a BU student working on gas leaks in town. She will go to the dead trees identified in the inventory and test soil and figure out percentage of dead trees that have natural gas leaks; this wouldn't involve Tim at all. Depending on results, Susan will see if we might recover something from National Grid since she is on the gas leaks task force and will ask. We have 50 dead trees standing right now. Visitor Brucie suggested that we could get Jessica Wright involved—grad student at BU working with Nathan Phillips, she's doing her work on gas leaks and arlington. **Action: John E will be in touch**
 - Watering of new trees. video of filling tree bag to be added to website once site is updated.

- Ecofest March 24 (Will feature tree planting promo piece, community canopy promotion, gator bag with hose inserted), MEA to get box of ATC items/banner to Steve/Tim. Eliza will bring poster and help set up
Brucie's idea for ECOfest: bring in a gator bag and a watering can or hose and show people, have them do it, etc. Mother's Out Front is doing a kids activity table, so can do it there too.
- Arbor Day planting event (location, timing etc). John suggested Bishop school, somebody's interested, maybe we can get one or two trees planted there. Visitor JoAnne mentioned that Laura Roth Russo is working on getting trees watered at Thompson.
Action: John will put JoAnne in touch with people he's been talking to there.
- At recent BoS meeting, there was unanticipated drama after trees were removed at 21 Hutchinson Rd (beautiful old home, huge lot, builders reached out to Tim to look at trees). Tim did everything he could to make certain the developers adhered to the bylaw but sadly old trees were removed. Abutters were present at meeting and upset that Tim couldn't do anything more to save the trees. Tim tried to explain to them the procedures of the bylaw. Susan Stamps was also present and defended Tim and the bylaw. As a result of this activity at BoS meeting, there was a last minute meeting scheduled for Monday morning Mar 12 with town counsel and interested parties in town manager's office, tried to set the record straight about what the rules are. Tim recommended that the residents get involved with the process—vote, join tree committee, help us.

3. Tree Preservation Bylaw amendments

- Susan explained that she has been working to amend bylaw so the selectmen can increase the fee for removing trees. Maybe next year we should be looking to amend the bylaw in terms of what we're doing for replacement trees. We should put back in what we originally had about replacing the tree inch for inch. Susan recalled that during her research she found that in Florida, you can't remove ANY trees on the property under any circumstances without permission of tree warden; she thinks the time might be right for that. (Brucie mentioned the Municipal vulnerability preparedness grant. It's a program that will help all cities and towns throughout state to address climate change impacts)
- Susan: our warrant article is to take out the \$500 flat fee for tree removal (of trees within the Preservation Bylaw setback) and replace it with language giving BoS ability to establish replacement fee based on actual cost to replace the tree. BoS are going to support it but Dan Dunn felt it was important to give a range of the fees they can expect to charge. Susan spoke to Doug Heim about it today and said we should have a "minimum" number in there. It was concluded that it should be a minimum of \$100 per inch DBH.
- Note re: Ch 87 Public Tree removals. John mentioned that Mike still has yet to approve the new proposed fee for public tree removal. Initially it was \$50 per inch but in Sept 2017 the Tree Committee voted to increase the fee to \$100 per inch. Mike has not yet approved this amount to take effect.

4. Community Tree Canopy Program 2018 (John/MEA)

- Revised Community Canopy form and related promo materials. Town issued purchase order for \$4750 for 50 trees: 25 hawthorne thornless galli (small) and 25 red oak. We can start publicizing it and trying to sell the trees. New England Nurseries guy would prefer to do all deliveries on the same day.
- Timeline – Ideally we have all checks and addresses no later than April 15. Arbor day is April 27. Mary Ellen may be working on the fliers. We are going to aim to

publicize this by next Wednesday or EcoFest. We should have a flyer available on that day. People could hand over a check and reserve a tree. We are going town-wide this year.

- Website updates – need to be done before publicity begins

5. Publicity/Outreach (Eliza)

- Vision 2020 results No update.
- EAB Update. Susan: reached out to Javier, hasn't heard back. Javier had said Belmont tree committee was going to do all this stuff, but they haven't actually done much yet. They decided to target a few places in town where there are a lot of ash trees and treat them. As for the other trees in town, they're just going to let it go. Visitor Brucie asked if we talked to habitat folks? Discussion of cost of treating Arlington's good and fair condition ash trees for EAB. These numbers are in the tree management plan. Would cost 120K to treat all the good condition trees. Going to try to get money in budget for treating them in 2020.
- Susan also spoke to someone from Belmont tree committee. They do it completely differently in belmont: it is understood that whenever there's any kind of town project involving trees—park renovation, new school building—that the tree warden has to be consulted initially and is involved in approving the plans. This process was made easier by town department reorganization, where building and grounds departments were transferred to public works. So schools and parks are under the umbrella of dpw. Belmont tree warden thinks he has jurisdiction over all the public trees—parks, etc. Tim: that's because parks commissioner hands it over to tree warden. Susan: that's something we should look into in arlington.
- John's presentations continue, though garden club talk got canceled today.
- Garden Club – planning a tree-themed tour for Sept 23
- Susan: talked to Adam Chapdelaine about including tree committee and warden in beginning of planning for any town projects that involve trees. He said it sounded like a good idea and was going to think about it.
- Erin from the Whittemore park (Cyrus Dallin museum) contacted us to get someone from tree committee involved. She also has reached out to Tim L

6. Inventory/Management Plan update (John/Mara, Eliza/Mary Ellen)

- Review process: Edits to be completed by ATC before going to Tim and Mike R. Mary Ellen will do first edit, then we will send it out to Tree Committee to review executive summary and conclusions (not the entire doc of data). Then, will have a subcommittee meeting (MEA, Mara, Susan) to discuss before sending draft to Mike and Tim.
- Document content to fulfill grant requirements
- Discussed how Tim could possibly visit all 1200 high priority trees before a contractor can do work on these trees. He can only get 30 trees visited per day.

7. New Business

- Rotary club ordered 25 saplings, they are 7-9 inches tall. Everybody is very enthusiastic about it but will likely partner with a school(s). Tim and Susan attended a morning meeting last week to discuss. Good outreach.
- New members – No discussion
- Tree steward program. No discussion
- Correspondence

- Letter from Carl Pike from Lancaster PA who wanted to know about gas leak meter—he heard from a friend who lives in arlington about it.
ACTION: Fwd to Susan
- Letter from a resident asking if arlington has considered using the cocoon method for tree watering—used in forestry planting. ***ACTION: Fwd letter to Tim.***

Next meeting: Committee meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month, April 12.